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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OPRC, KMDR, KPAO, GM

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CIA IRAQ IRAN KASHMIR;BERLIN

- A. Lead Stories Summary
- B. (U.S.) Secret CIA Prisons
- C. (U.S.) Iraq War Debate
- D. (Iran) Ahmadinejad Replaces Ambassadors, Remarks
- E. (Kashmir) Aftermath Of Quake

- A. Lead Stories Summary

HEADLINES

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Increase In VAT Likely (Frankfurter Allgemeine)

Telekom Plans To Cut 32,000 Jobs (Sueddeutsche Zeitung)

Deutsche Telekom To Cut 32,000 Jobs (Die Welt)

Platzek's Election As SPD Leader Certain (Frankfurter Rundschau)

Platzek Wanted Nahles As SPD Vice Chairperson - She Declined Offer (Tagesspiegel)

Coalition Plans To Support Parents (Berliner Zeitung)

Editorials focused on Matthias Platzek as new SPD leader, the reaction of the CSU to the return of Stoiber to Munich, and Iran's move to replace its ambassadors worldwide. ZDF-TV's early evening newscast heute and ARD-TV's early evening newscast Tagesschau opened with stories on the coalition talks.

B. (U.S.) Secret CIA Prisons

1. "Freedom?"

Christoph von Marschall commented in centrist Der Tagesspiegel of Berlin (11/3):

"It does not come as a surprise that a U.S. administration, which holds al-Qaida detainees in Cuba and in autocratic Arab countries taking measures there disallowed by U.S. constitution on American soil, also operates secret 'black sites' in Eastern Europe. What a mistake! Just the description of the place as former 'Soviet-era compounds' illustrates how far Bush's administration moved away in counterterrorism measures from the pretended 'freedom agenda.' To torture where the KGB broke people is a perversion of freedom. Why are young democracies, whose new elites often suffered under communism, interested in participating against international laws and the human rights defined in their constitutions? Despite the understandable admiration of America in these countries, which defenselessly faced Soviet confinement for decades, the EU must not allow their new members to be compliances. At a late point of time, Bush is now dealt the results for war lies and disrespecting international laws. The Democrats appear to be discovering an election issue. Bush cannot divert the attention from it by programs against the avian flu and nominating new judges."

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C. (U.S.) Iraq War Debate

1. "Closed Session"

Klaus-Dieter Frankenberger commented in center-right Frankfurter Allgemeine (11/3):

"Closed sessions are great theatrics in front of an empty gallery, which further undermine non-partisan policies and do not contribute anything. The following example shows

that all parties are simply playing tactical games: The president has come under pressure over a scandal that has to do with the Iraq war rationale. To divert the attention from it, he starts a dispute by nominating a conservative candidate for the Supreme Court. The Democrats are now playing with the schedule to divert attention from the distraction. Is everything all right in the Capitol? In times of such polarization, cultural clashes and unpopular military engagements, non-partisan reasons fall by the wayside. This is a great loss."

2. "Bush Under Fire"

Josef Joffe observed in center-left, weekly Die Zeit of Hamburg (11/3):

"The best spinning will not drive away the ghost of the Iraq war. Ninety-two Americans died in October - the highest number since January. Libbygate might be difficult to understand, but the scandal is nagging the voters' souls. Maybe Bush knew that Saddam did not possess any weapons of mass destruction; maybe the true liars are Bush and Cheney? Many people still believe that Bush will overcome the rough phase of his second term like Clinton and Reagan, but it will not be a triumph, because a greater prosecutor than Fitzgerald is waiting in the background: the endless Iraq war."

D. (Iran) Ahmadinejad Replaces Ambassadors, Remarks

1. "Change Of Course"

Wolfgang Gnter Lerch opined in an editorial in center-right Frankfurter Allgemeine (11/3):

"It may be possible that a few of the 40 Iranian

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ambassadors, which Iran wants to see back home early next year, have really reached retirement age, but the fact that the Iranian ambassadors to London, Berlin, and Paris are among them allows far-reaching conclusions. The assumption is appropriate that President Ahmadinejad plans to place like-minded people in the diplomatic service of his country.. It is becoming increasingly clear that Iranian ranks are to be closed and the talks about the country's nuclear program are to be brought in line with the president's view. At the same time, the reshuffle is also an expression of the power struggle in Tehran between Ahmadinejad's supporters and the ones of former president Rafsanjani, who was defeated in the elections and who wants to make up lost ground. With his personnel policy, the acting president is expanding his power base."

2. "Diplomatic Enforced Conformity"

Rudolph Chimelli argued in an editorial in center-left Sueddeutsche Zeitung of Munich (11/3):

"Heads are rolling in Iran's diplomatic service.. The fired diplomats began their career under reform president Khatami, and even under his predecessor Rafsanjani. In a pragmatic way, they sought the modus vivendi with the western countries.. But irrespective of all denials, it is clear that they have now been summoned for political reasons. A radical boss wants radical representatives. Never before has a regime undertaken such a diplomatic clear-cut without a revolution. The only one of the old school who will stay in office is the Iranian ambassador to the UN. He is the last direct contact with the Americans. For the upcoming nuclear talks in mid-November in Vienna or Iran's reputation in the UN Security Council, this reshuffle of experienced experts for apparatchiks who toe the line, does not bode well. President Ahmadinejad began this enforced conformity almost unnoticeably a few weeks ago at home by replacing governors. Now it is continued abroad."

3. "Iran Is Turning Into A Threat"

Jacques Schuster opined in an editorial in right-of-center Die Welt of Berlin (11/3):

"When Iran's President Ahmadinejad won the run-off elections in June, the West reassured itself by saying it was religious leader Khamenei, not him who is the strong man in Iran. And Khamenei would see to it that the ultra conservative president would act in the framework of the

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previous policy and when Ahmadinejad threatened to wipe Israel off the map, there were global protests. But many observers heaved a sigh of relief when a few diplomats in Tehran minimized the words of their president. Now, Ahmadinejad is firing dozens of ambassadors, whom he considers to be too moderate.. This step may hardly reassure anyone as such, but in the series of the president's previous activities, this step is alarming. In less than 100 days, Ahmadinejad has radicalized his country's policy. We do not want to imagine what else could come from Tehran.. Under its new president, Iran is not only a problem, it is turning into a threat."

4. "NATO Protection For Israel"

Thomas Klau judged in an editorial in business daily Financial Times Deutschland of Hamburg (11/3):

"The time has come to think about the option of placing Israel and other Middle East nations' membership in NATO on the political agenda and to intensely discuss the pros and cons of such a step. The election of anti-western and anti-Israeli fanatic Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as Iran's president has intensified the instability of the region. We do not know the future course of the Iranian regime, but the vitriolic attacks of a president are an alarming signal, which should not allow the world to carry on with business as usual. There are many indications that Iran is working on the development of the nuclear bomb and that it is now being led by a president whose rhetoric voices an aggressive and devastating war against Israel. No one can say for sure that this combination will not lead to a new escalation.

"But a few credible military experts say that military attacks on Iranian nuclear power plants are useless. And the lack of western capacities and the perspective of an enormous bloodshed exclude any considerations of an invasion, as long as Iran does not start a war on its own. Nevertheless, a strong, military reaction of the West will be necessary if the radicalization of the Iranian regime is to be confirmed in the near future.

"The offer for Israel's membership in NATO linked to the offer of a NATO accession for the Palestinian state as part of an overall peace settlement would be such a strong signal. Israel's claim for its own borders would be emphasized with the strongest security guarantee that is available in the world right now. At the same time, NATO would help overcome the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and signal with the integration of the Palestinian state that it

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is willing to accept Arab countries.."

5. "Anti-Semites In Tehran"

Matthias Nass opined in an editorial in center-left, weekly Die Zeit of Hamburg (11/3):

"Indeed the call for 'wiping out' Israel is not the rhetorical gaffe of a radical politician from the countryside, who has become state president and who has not yet learned the diplomatic vocabulary. The Iranian revolutionaries, who ousted the Shah in 1979, pursued a second goal right from the onset: they wanted to drive the Jews into the sea. and Ahmadinejad came from these revolutionary guards.. His tone may be rougher than the one of his predecessors, but even his predecessors did not distance themselves from Israel's destruction..

"No, no one should be mistaken: the fight against Israel remains an Iranian state doctrine.. Anti-Semitic agitation is bad enough. But Iran also supports Israel's enemies - Hamas and the Islamic Jihad in Palestine, Hezbollah in Lebanon - with money and guns. And now Tehran is trying to get the bomb. This is an apocalyptic imagination not only for Israel. The bomb should never be in the hands of a regime that wants to make a part of the world 'Jews-free.'"

E. (Kashmir) Aftermath Of Quake

1. "Kashmir In Need"

Thomas Osterkorn noted in center-left, illustrated weekly Stern of Hamburg (11/3):

"Aid workers not only struggle with the unapproachable territory, they also lack financial resources. While the world donated 12 billion dollars after the tsunami disaster, donors hesitate to support the victims of the quake. The UN warns that if more money is not quickly supplied, numerous people will not survive the tough winter in the mountains."

2. "Terror In Delhi"

Ulrich Ladurner wrote in center-left, weekly Die Zeit of Hamburg (11/3):

"In Pakistan's part of Kashmir, survivors of the earthquake are dying from the cold and tetanus, because

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there is a shortage of shelters and shots. That should be a sufficient reason to help the people in Kashmir, but being hit by such a gruesome tragedy, they are now plunged into a deeper catastrophe. That is what the assassins of the October 29 attacks in Delhi, which killed 60 people, did.. Their message was that even if Kashmir falls, they are still ready to fight for it. That is madness. However, there is a rationale behind it. The Kashmir conflict has not been solved yet. The quake has not changed that and the terrorists continue to throw bombs to make sure that it stays that way. By the way, the people in Pakistan also died from the cold and tetanus because there are not enough donations."

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